

NEWS FROM NORTH DAKOTA'S CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION

**Senator Kent
CONRAD**

**Senator Byron
DORGAN**

**Congressman Earl
POMEROY**

For Release: Wednesday, March 29, 2000

Contact: Dana McCallum (Dorgan) (202) 224-9255

Laurie Boeder (Conrad) (202) 224-2043

Karen Krieg (Pomeroy) (202) 225-2611

DELEGATION ANNOUNCES NORTH DAKOTA NATIONAL GUARD DEPLOYMENT SHORTENED

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) ---Congressman Earl Pomeroy and Senators Kent Conrad and Byron Dorgan announced today that the nearly 150 members of North Dakota's Company B of the 142nd Engineer Combat Battalion who were originally scheduled for a nine month mission to Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo will be returning home at the end of July, more than two months ahead of schedule. The action comes at the request of the North Dakota congressional delegation.

On March 6, the Army had announced a new policy on maximum deployment duration for Operations Other Than War (OOTW) and Small Scale Contingency (SSC) operations. The policy limits operational employment duration to 179 days. After the announcement by the Army, the delegation contacted the the Secretary of the Army Louis Caldera and the Secretary of Defense William Cohen to request that the newly implemented policy limiting deployment times for National Guardsmen to six months be applied retroactively to the North Dakota unit that had left in January.

"We are extremely pleased that the Department of Defense has decided to adjust the deployment time for the men and women of the 142nd Battalion," the delegation said in a joint release. "This is good news for the families and the men and women who have been faced with the prospect of a nine month deployment away from family, friends and their jobs."

"We commend General Bjerke for his admirable efforts working within the military to shorten the deployment time for our troops from North Dakota," said the delegation.

"We applaud the Army's decision to shorten the deployment of Company B and appreciate their recognition of the hardship placed on the families and businesses of North Dakota by the nine month deployment time. We continue to send our thoughts and best wishes to our men and women serving in Kosovo and look forward to their return in late July," the delegation concluded.